

Reasons I oppose Senate Bills 253 and 254**By Judy White****Missoula, MT 59806**

Most tipped jobs are in the service industry and the amount of tips received always reflect the state of the economy. Examples of service jobs are waiting tables, being a motel maid, or serving in a bar; it is very strenuous, labor-intensive work, and over time, often leads to disabilities like carpal tunnel syndrome, torn rotator cuffs, etc. which often affects quality of life down the road. I know several servers personally who fit into this category.

People who want to work hard in the service industries and are able to, should not be penalized for their efforts because they have chosen an occupation where they can earn tips as well as a fair wage. Many people work at these kinds of jobs because they do not have a college education, yet they want to earn a half-way decent living for themselves and their families. Others, like myself, find jobs as servers in university towns because it can be a flexible, part-time way to work one's way through college, without owing the national debt to do so. Had I chosen to work at a job making a minimum wage or slightly above, and had I not used my AmeriCorps education award and other earned scholarships, my student loan debt today might have been \$40,000 instead of \$20,000 for 3 years of schooling. I chose to go back to school after my family was grown and gone, at the age of 54 to get a bachelor's degree in social work, which I did, graduating in 2007 at the age of 57. I now work at a job that I love, as the volunteer coordinator at Partner's Hospice in Missoula, where I have the honor and privilege to teach and facilitate classes, and match volunteers with hospice patients and their care-giving families, which is a deeply satisfying job. And, I am grateful I had the health and stamina and opportunity to work my way through college to reach this personal goal, as a server. I could not have done so without the flexibility of the job, and the tips I earned as a server. And, I can assure you I am not an isolated case. Many young and old folks, like myself, do the same.

I ask you to think long and think hard about these bills that would impede this kind of initiative on the part of our most common citizens, like myself. Thank you.